NWACC Faculty Business Meeting

Minutes
Friday, 28 September 2007
Burns Hall 2303 (Music Room)

Linda Lovell, President of the Faculty Senate, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m., with 44 faculty members attending.

Introduction and exchange/Q&A with John Tuthill

Lovell introduced Dr. John Tuthill, outlining his academic background, experiences and interests. Dr. Tuthill began with a comment that he was an administrator, in front of the faculty, without a shield, attending because the administration is interested in building bridges. He said he was clear in his interview for his position at NWACC, saying what he was, and he was hired anyway. He also stated he has observed people have more of a common vision than they think they have.

In response to the first question, what is his job, Dr. Tuthill replied it was not clear in his interview, not clear when he arrived on the job, and it is still evolving. He is on 32 committees, so he goes to meetings. Beyond that, he seems to be translating. By training, Dr. Tuthill is a faculty member. He is also an administrator, so he talks both languages. When he talks—when he translates—things seem to get done. Who does he work for? The students.

Asked if he is the chief academic officer (CAO), Dr. Tuthill said that is what Dr. Ates calls him, however, Dr. Tuthill suspects Dr. Ates is the chief academic officer, although Dr. Tuthill has not seen Dr. Ates' job description. Dr. Tuthill said externally, Dr. Ates is the CAO, internally, as far as getting things done, Dr. Tuthill serves as the CAO.

When queried as to what he sees as the most significant challenges in the academic area, Dr. Tuthill described the college as a Hollywood set, a Universal Studios tour, but with nothing here. Looking at the college from all sides, there are students, the parking garage, everything is on the move, knows where it's going, an anthill of people rushing around, frantically busy. NWACC has outgrown its policies, doing different things every semester, which wastes time. One of the challenges, said Dr. Tuthill, is to straighten out policies. Another is getting communication and dialogue to work. Other challenges are faculty rank and classroom size.

How will Dr. Tuthill get the dialogue going? By translating, he hopes to get both sides to the same place. Dr. Tuthill mentioned class size. It's been increased, this is a community college, faculty are here to teach, there is open enrollment, the college wants to say yes to students. Dr. Ates has asked Dr. Tuthill to take care of it; he is now authorized to lower it. But he is not going to do so, because NWACC is in the business of open enrollment, with a 12 percent growth in enrollment this year.

More students are going to keep coming. Classroom space isn't going to expand. Dr. Tuthill presented three options: 1) pack in more students; 2) use classroom space more wisely with MWF classes; 3) put students on a waiting list. The administration has chosen the first two options. Is 24 the optional number in writing-intensive courses? No, but he asked the faculty to give him a way to do it. A long term solution would be a second campus in Washington County, a plan which is in the books. Dr. Tuthill is on that committee. They won't have a solution in January.

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As for once a week evening classes, Dr. Tuthill explained if a class doesn't make, the room is only available for one night, whereas if the class is to meet twice but doesn't make, the room is available part time. Dr. Tuthill wasn't here when the decision to reschedule classes was made, but he is hearing "utilization of classroom space," with a need to have a 65 percent classroom rate. At his first board meeting, he observed a chart showing 65 percent use in the mornings, below 65 percent in the evenings, 50 percent in the afternoons.

At this point, Lovell asked the faculty if they wished to extend Dr. Tuthill's time by an additional 15 minutes. The motion was made and passed.

Dr. Tuthill says the push to change the schedule is to get more mileage out of available classroom space. There are no plans to increase classroom space on the main campus, other than possibly mobile classrooms. NWACC doesn't own land in Washington County, just in Benton County. Asked if it would be a duplication of effort, to expand in Washington County, Dr. Tuthill replied in the affirmative, but said he would argue NWACC needs that duplication.

Mentioning an unpleasant classroom, a faculty member asked Dr. Tuthill to please translate the need to address the room to administration. Another classroom related question was about additional classes on second floor. There will be four more, according to Dr. Tuthill. Are students being asked what they want? As far as Dr. Tuthill knows, no, it needs to be done, but there is no instrument to address what students need. That research is in its infancy. The data gathered is not specific enough. It is known morning classes fill up first.

There was another question about night classes, how it was unfair for adjuncts to have to come two nights when in the past they only had to come one night. Dr. Tuthill said the schedule was going to have to offer options; adjuncts would have to be allowed to teach one night only. A faculty member pointed out the difficulties of scheduling, because the schedule had to be submitted without knowing classroom availability. There appear to be problems with the scheduling program, according to Dr. Tuthill, although the person in charge thinks it can be made to work. In addition, there are certain needs for certain classes. Dr. Tuthill has a printout of all classroom use, but he cannot respond to classroom use issues until he knows more.

Does Dr. Tuthill think we can add more faculty? He replied this is directly related to enrollment, he had signed off on four new full time faculty that afternoon, and there may be more. What about students using My NWACC Connection? Dr. Tuthill says they don't use it, they don't check e-mail.

In response to a question about scheduling classes using data from a survey completed a couple of years ago, Dr. Tuthill asked if anyone could share that data with him. He did not know if Dr. Ates had the data or not. Faculty expressed concerns about teaching based on disciplines, diverse schedules, dropping all MWF classes after 2 p.m. Dr. Tuthill replied that community colleges are in the business of saying "yes," of supporting education. Community colleges are also money driven—the more student growth, the more funds available from the state.

As Dr. Tuthill's extended time came to an end, Lovell asked if the faculty was interested in having him joining more of these meetings. The response was positive. Dr. Tuthill invited the faculty to visit his office, BH 1303, directly below the meeting room.

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Curriculum Committee Proposals—Curtis Harrell

Harrell began by explaining the curriculum changes are not proposals, rather they have already been approved by the Faculty Senate. The procedures for proposals have changed, with the process now online in the Intranet. Forms should be completed, printed, signed by the instructor and the dean and sent to Curtis. The curriculum committee reviews the proposals, then presents them to the Senate for approval. This new procedure also allows the class to be integrated into Banner and the catalog. Harrell mentioned Dr. Tuthill is very interested in learning assessments and outcomes, so that may be added to the process, which will remain electronic.

There are three new courses. Supply Chain Management, TRLG 1013, is a new field of study. Payroll and Business Tax Accounting, ACCT 2073, and Supervision, BADM 2533, provide students with more hands-on experience. The fourth course, Sculpture, ART 2203, has been in the catalog but not in Banner. It is has actually included several courses, but with no accountability to the course description. This give the actual course the number it is supposed to have.

The next Curriculum Committee meeting will be in two weeks; proposals should be entered by 5:00 p.m. Friday, one week before meetings.

Student Learning Assessment—Diana Nagel

Nagel and the other members of the small learning assessment unit have spent the year revising the assessment process. She stated the faculty need to take ownership of learning assessment so they know if the curriculum needs to be changed. Dr. Tuthill needs data to move ahead. There need to be ways to assess. Suggestions were to consider grades, to look at MWF/TTh, when the brightest students sign up for classes. Nagel said the data needs to be significant, that five percent is not enough difference to make a change.

Lovell said faculty and administration want evidence and are asking for it from each other. This is data driven. There was a suggestion to use the NCTE website to research typical classroom size. Discussion also covered class size, adjunct involvement, night class size, Friday morning classes, and the iPod survey, which is apparently just for students.

Faculty Rank

The current policy, which is in the faculty handbook, was presented so everyone will be aware of what it is, since there seems to be a perception of inconsistencies. Lovell and Carey Chaney, co-chairs of the Faculty Handbook Committee, met with Dr. Ates to see what changes he wants, whether they are major or minor.

One person with eight years experience shared that she was told by her dean there was no means of applying for higher rank, that there is no faculty rank, although it appears in the faculty handbook. Someone said they had heard the Deans Council has put faculty rank on hold, however, this is not in writing nor have others heard it. Faculty rank carries weight when presenting at conferences and writing student letters. Comments on faculty rank should be shared with Lovell.

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News:
Policy Processes—Linda Lovell
--Consistency
--Written

The Senate wants more consistency in policies across the divisions and wants them written down. Lovell presented her point: if it is not written down, it does not exist, it is not a policy.

TR Open Time 3:00—4:15 beginning in Spring

Next semester, full time faculty will be able to meet from 3:00 to 4:15 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Deans were to share this information with full time faculty if they were scheduled to teach during that time. Adjuncts will be asked to teach during this time. Everyone should be aware of this.

Adjunct Faculty—Free Use of NWACC Fitness Center

The policy has been changed to allow adjunct faculty to use the Fitness Center at no cost. There had been concern because of the number of adjuncts who might be using it, but there has not been a large increase in use.

Conflict of interest/Policy on Faculty Royalties

This policy is enacted by the Arkansas legislature. Lovell is contacting the University of Arkansas Faculty Senate to see how they established their policy. Three senators, Curtis Harrell, Teresa Briggs, and Conrad Krauft, have been working on a policy, addressing conflict of interest and providing a workable formula. There was a question about study guides written by faculty being used in classes. The three senators working on the policy would appreciate any input. Lovell also said the faculty will be asked to vote on the policy at the November 30th Faculty Business Meeting.

Student Publication

Denise Nemec announced the student publication, the NWACC Eagle's View, went to press during the faculty meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30.

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